

ASHA supports many of the recommended changes for charitable and philanthropic uses.

With regard to **grandfathering**, it is important that stricter rules not be applied to associations already granted special exceptions...especially as these rules might relate to future building expansions.

ASHA, for example, moved to its campus-like location in the mid-seventies with a clear understanding that future expansions would be permissible if needed. We think such expansion capability is critical to accommodate growth that we and many associations experience.

With reference to the **FAR**, we appreciate the increase in the floor area that can be constructed (.20 to .25 FAR for those of us who already have special exceptions). We believe this change properly recognizes that building height and separation from residential areas are better determinants of compatibility than gross square footage.

However, with regard to **parking**, compatibility with the surrounding area should be the criterion as to where and how the parking should be located rather than a “one size fits all” approach with parking in the back and sides. For example, ASHA’s parking is virtually invisible from both Rockville Pike and from Strathmore Avenue.

Conclusion

First, I want you to know how much we appreciate the willingness of the Park and Planning Board as well as the Park and Planning Staff...with whom we met several times...to enter into dialogue with Montgomery County’s association community.

Second, I want you to know that Associations are good for the county. Associations increase the County’s visibility nationwide; associations are quiet neighbors; and associations directly benefit the community as well as society at large. Please take those actions that will encourage associations to locate to and remain in Montgomery County.